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REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE DECLARATION ON THE
STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-eighth year

Letter dated 22 December 1993 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a letter from His Excellency Mr. Vladislav Jovanovic, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, addressed to you (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 79, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dragomir DJOKIC
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

ANNEX

Letter dated 14 December 1993 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the Secretary-General

In certain regions of the former Yugoslav federal unit of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the process of ethnic cleansing of Serbs and destruction of their spiritual and cultural heritage is taking place. Such activities of the Croatian and Muslim armed forces are in contravention of the international conventions on human rights and fundamental freedoms, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Convention on the Protection of Cultural Heritage.

I. Religious establishments destroyed or damaged in the Eparchies of the Serbian Orthodox Church in former Bosnia and Herzegovina

1. The Eparchy of Banja Luka (seat in Banja Luka): one Orthodox church demolished;

2. The Eparchy of Bihać and Petrovac (seat in Petrovac):

(a) five churches demolished;

(b) two churches damaged;

(c) one parochial home burned down and one charnel house dynamited;

3. The Eparchy of Dabar and Bosnia (seat in Sarajevo):

(a) 10 churches demolished;

(b) 12 churches damaged;

(c) seven parochial homes demolished, one chapel damaged and two demolished, and the Eparchy seat destroyed.

4. The Eparchy of Zahumlje and Herzegovina (the oldest Eparchy of the Serbian Orthodox Church, established by Saint Sava in 1219, with the seat in Hum, now in Mostar):

(a) 24 churches demolished;

(b) 16 churches damaged;

(c) one Monastery demolished, two Bishop's residences dynamited, two parochial homes and one chapel demolished, two chapels damaged, five cemeteries destroyed and five damaged.

The Serbs, with Muslims the most populous in the region, were brutally expelled from Mostar and its surroundings. This ethnic cleansing was carried out jointly by Croats and Muslims. The world media and the international community turned a blind eye to this horrendous crime against the Serb population of Mostar and its surroundings, thus stoking the violent clashes between Muslims and Croats for the control of the town. In these clashes, Croats destroyed the Old Bridge over the Neretva River erected in the sixteenth century by Turks with the labour of enslaved Serbs.

5. The Eparchy of Zvornik and Tuzla (seat in Tuzla):

(a) 32 churches demolished;

(b) 26 churches damaged;

(c) 20 parochial homes demolished, the seat, Bishop's residence and eight parochial homes damaged, one chapel and two cemeteries demolished.

II. Destruction of historical and cultural monuments of the Serb people

The following cultural and historical monuments were destroyed:

1. The old Orthodox church in Mostar, built in the sixteenth century.

2. The cathedral church in Mostar, built in 1873, one of the biggest churches in the Serb Patriarchate, with exceptionally valuable items. Shelled on 7 and 8 June 1992, its belfry was destroyed and its interior burned down on 15 June. Subsequently, the church was dynamited and razed to the ground.

3. The Monastery of Žitomislić (in the Eparchy of Zahumlje and Herzegovina), built in 1563, was burned and destroyed on 15 July 1992. This Monastery had been damaged also in the Second World War and its monks killed by Croatian Ustashe, forerunners of the present Tudjman regime.

4. The Church of Saint George at Kopači (in the Eparchy of Dabar and Bosnia), built by Herceg Stjepan in 1446, was looted and burned down by the Muslim armed forces of Alija Izetbegović, while the adjacent cemetery was ploughed over.

5. Croatian armed forces established their bivouac in the Monastery at Zavala, built in the fifteenth century. They desecrated and damaged this unique spiritual and cultural monument of the Serb people, with frescoes dating back to 1690, just as they desecrated and damaged the Serb Orthodox church in Dubrovnik, in which they set up their quarters on 2 October 1992.

6. The charnel-houses at Prebilovci, Veličani and Livno, with the remains of the Serbs brutally killed by Croatian Ustashe and the Muslim Hanjar Division in the Second World War have been dynamited or burned down.

III. Perpetrators, time and manner of destruction

The perpetrators of these acts were the armed forces of Bosnian Croats and Muslims and the units of the regular army of Croatia. These crimes were committed also at the beginning of the civil war, while Tudjman's Croatia and its acolytes Bosnian Croats and Alija Izetbegović's Muslims were still great allies and very hard at work dynamiting, burning down and ploughing over Serb spiritual and cultural monuments, dating back to the medieval times, in a vain attempt to erase the evidence of their centuries-old presence in these lands.

Convinced of the need that it is necessary to invest every effort to bring about peace and protect the life and dignity of every man and woman and the right to life and comprehensive development of every people, I trust and believe that the Serb people will also be granted the same rights and protection before the international community and its forums.